



FEMA

Fact Sheet

Pre-Scripted Mission Assignments

FEMA uses Mission Assignments (MA) to task and reimburse other federal departments and agencies to provide direct assistance during emergencies and disasters. In recent years, the Mission Assignment process has been expanded to include Pre-Scripted Mission Assignments (PSMAs), which are prepared in advance to facilitate a more rapid response and standardize the process of developing mission assignments. Since 2006, FEMA has increased the number of PSMAs from 44 with two federal agencies to 223, in coordination with 31 federal agencies. PSMA support ranges from heavy-lift helicopters from the Department of Defense, to generators from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to Disaster Medical Assistance Teams from HHS, and Emergency Road Clearing Teams from the U.S. Forest Service.

An internal work group was assembled in the Fall of 2007 to review and improve existing MA processes. In collaboration with national and regional response partners, the MA Work Group was asked to develop new procedures to increase visibility and financial oversight, add greater specificity and accountability and improve the timeliness of the MA process.

To ensure the credibility of the review, the working group engaged a wide range of interdisciplinary partners and considered MA project management, governance, training needs, limiting factors and resource constraints. The conclusions of the working group led to the establishment of the mission assignment process as an official program within the Disaster Operations Directorate.

The MAWG determined that a major issue needing to be addressed is adequate staffing at MA training has been increased at the Emergency Management Institute and in the FEMA Regional offices. Seven MA training courses were conducted in

FY07 and more than a dozen courses have been held in FY08. Additional MA courses are planned and in fact the Disaster Ops MA Program, in conjunction with EMI, is assisting in the development of a MA Training Plan, including a “train the trainer” course and exercise cycle to meet future needs. An additional resource, a FEMA intranet based MA web page, is also planned.

- Improvements have been made in the MA and Pre-scripted Mission Assignment (PSMA) processes.
- A Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual for MAs has been developed to:
 - o explain and streamline the process for issuing MAs;
 - o outline the policies, procedures, and processes that FEMA uses to interact and coordinate with other Federal Departments and Agencies and organizations when responding to disasters;
 - o provide response and recovery personnel with detailed information and guidance for executing MAs during declared emergencies or major disasters;
 - o ensure compliance with NIMS, ICS, and the PSMA Approval Process.
- The MA SOP document is still under development and is being closely coordinated with FEMA’s CFO. Plans are to release an updated “Coordinating Draft” by early September 2008.
- MA processes will be integrated into the new Emergency Management Information Management System program, as appropriate, and recommendations will be drafted before year's end.
- For PSMAs, a 2008 PSMA Catalogue outlining procedures for issuing PSMAs was released in June 2008. The Catalogue contains directions for use, comments, and improvements and a listing of all PSMAs. Additional PSMAs are under consideration and in various stages of development and any new PSMAs will be included in a PSMA Catalogue Supplement.

FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation, to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters.

